

Woodville Republican.

"THE CONSTITUTION"

AND THE UNION."

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POETICAL.

ON!
From the dark and troubled surges
Of the roaring sea of time,
Evermore a word emerges,
Solemn, beautiful, sublime;
So of old, from Grecian water,
Mid the music and the balm,
Rose the dread Olympian's daughter,
Floating on the azure calm.

Evermore the worlds are fading,
Evermore the worlds will bloom,
To revere our weak upbraiding,
To throw brightness on the gloom;
Ever the imperfect passes,
But the perfect ever grows;
Forests sink to drear morasses,
Fairer landscapes to disclose.

All the beauty, all the splendor,
Of the ancient earth and sky—
Graceful form and person tender,
All have passed in silence by.
Man the fairest, Man the youngest,
Man, the darling of the Gods,
With the weakest, with the strongest,
Travels to the still accedes.

All his brothers unflinching,
To the eternal plan conform,
Fall unquailing, unrepenting,
In the calm and in the storm,
Man, too, with a quiet bearing,
With brave heart and steadfast eye,
Undisturbed and undespairing,
Yes, with noble joy, must die!

Has he shared what nature proffered?
Gladly taken what she gave?
Now the one last gift is offered—
Let him take that gift—the grave.
With a grand renunciation,
Let him leave to earth and sun
For another generation
All the good that he hath done.

Knowing that the laws eternal
Never, never can deceive;
Raised above the sphere diurnal,
And too noble, far, to grieve,
Glad that he has been the agent
Of the universal heart,
That in life's majestic pageant,
He has played no worthless part.

So a great and holy feeling
Shall sustain his human soul,
And a silent strength revealing
Shall the part re-seek the whole.
It shall change, but shall not perish,
Now in life and now in death,
For what most we love and cherish,
Dies to breathe a nobler breath.

Governor Poindexter's Letter.

Jackson, March 24, 1851.

Gentlemen: I have had the honor to receive your communication of 18th inst., informing me of my nomination by a convention styled "The Southern Rights Convention" as one of the candidates for the county of Hinds, for a seat in the Convention of Delegates, to be chosen in September next, from the several counties of this State, according to the provisions of an act of the General Assembly, approved Nov. 30, 1850.

With feelings of grateful sensibility for this manifestation of the confidence reposed in me by the members of the "Southern Rights Convention," whom you represent, I have maturely considered the proposition submitted to me, to become a candidate for this Convention, and have now the honor to make known to you the result of my reflections on this subject.

My political labors in this country, commenced under a territorial form of government, nearly half a century past; and I may say, with perfect truth, the best years of my life have been assiduously devoted to the advancement of the liberty, prosperity and happiness of the people of Mississippi. More than fifteen years past, I have ceased to be connected with the discharge of official duties in this State, for causes and considerations of which, it does not become me to speak. But at all times, and under all circumstances, I consider myself bound, at the call of my fellow-citizens, to devote myself, according to the best of my ability, to their service on all occasions in which such service may, in any manner, contribute to the preservation of their rights, or the advancement of their welfare.

Whether the crisis has arisen in which my services, and the experience of a long life—much of which has been spent in the councils of the nation—can be of practical benefit to the country, is a matter concerning which I feel great diffidence in offering a decided opinion; but considerations, connected with the advanced period of my life, and consequent physical inability to endure the labor and fatigue of an active political campaign, admonish me that the time has arrived when prudence and propriety would dictate my withdrawal from all political conflicts, and especially such as lead to partisan controversies, calculated more to arouse the angry passions than to enlighten the public mind, and perpetuate, on a solid

basis, the free institutions under which we have so long lived and prospered.

There is a time in the life of a statesman when, in the language of Mr. Jefferson, "feeling the physical effects of an advanced age, he ought not to doubt its mental effects also;" and, for one, I am content with the honors which my country has already conferred on me, and am unwilling, by seeking to continue in public life, at the age of threescore and ten and upwards, to compromise away what little fame I may have acquired, and long with it the constitutional rights of my fellow-citizens.

Examples of this kind have fallen under my observation, and are to be found in our political annals; but I do not follow them. The duties to be performed, cannot result in consequence injurious to the great interests, peace and tranquility of the State, or the confederacy; but may be productive of benefits in preserving from overthrow, our Federal Union—which, happen when it may, will precipitate this great Republic into a vortex of evils from which it will be difficult for the wisdom, moderation and patriotism of the best and wisest statesmen of the Nation to extricate it.

The Convention, when assembled, as required by the act under which it is called to proceed to "consider the then existing relations between the Government of the United States, and the Government and the people of the State of Mississippi."

This consideration is to be directed to the action of the Government of the United States, and the wrongs, (if any,) which have been inflicted by that Government, in violation of the Constitution on the Southern States of the Confederacy; and if so, of the means and measure of redress and security—and finally, to adopt such measures for vindicating the sovereignty of the State, and the protection of its institutions as shall appear to them to be demanded. I could have no hesitation in entering upon the duties thus assigned to me, to be performed as a member of this Convention, without the slightest apprehension of mischief to the Republic, either as to its perpetuity or its primitive organization.

It would become my province to look at the state of the Union, existing at the date of the assembling of the Convention and if at that date, the political sky is clear—if the clouds which may, prior to that date, have obscured the sun of our national glory, and the equal rights of the members comprising the confederacy shall have been dispelled, and the prospect before us opens the vista of equality and justice, and of peace and tranquility among the States of this Union, my duties as a member of this Convention, under such a state of facts, will have ended, save on y to announce the pleasing intelligence to those whom I should have the honor to represent.

In the choice of members of this Convention, no party organization would seem to be required. The state of the country, its constitution and laws, and the preservation of both from infraction, by means of which justice and equality may be secured to all its parts, assuredly involves no party principles or measures, unless the unreasonable supposition should be entertained that there is a party in this country who seek to reach the climax of despotic power, under the guise of "Union," or another party who have organized for the purpose of abrogating both the Constitution and the laws, made in pursuance thereof, and thereby prostrate our existing form of government under the popular cognomen of Democracy. The existence of such parties, or either of them, is not to be credited; and therefore, as a member of the Convention, my duties would be confined to a broad and general view of the condition of the whole country, and of its parts, in reference to constitutional rights and responsibilities, and so to act, if practicable, as to transmit this Government, unimpaired, to our posterity. But even if driven to the last alternative, I would meet the painful necessity of providing for the honor and safety of the State to which I belong, and of other States having similar institutions and interests. These duties soar a sightless distance above the groveling and contemptible struggles of parties seeking to obtain political power, at the sacrifice of everything held sacred by that portion of the Union whose confidence they have obtained and abused. No party considerations, new or old, ought to find a place in this Convention, if it be intended to secure the future peace and tranquility of the Republic.

The attempt is made to fasten on the public mind in the approaching election of members to this Convention, a discrimination between parties, under the designation "Union" and "Disunion"—laying aside all the causes which have produced the convulsions and agitations which have threatened the stability of this Government for several years past. In my judgment, such an issue is, in its very terms, insulting to the people of these confederated States, and a disgrace to the American name. It implies a distrust of the fidelity of the free people to the institutions which constitute the guarantee of their liberties, and which were established by the wisdom and virtue of our ancestors, by whose valor the independence of the nation was achieved.

This feeling of attachment to the Government runs through the veins of every American citizen, and is of a character too sacred to be put in issue to subvert the purposes of unholy ambition. I would trust no man with any high political duty, who had no better claims to my confidence than the assumed disunion of a self-styled "Union man;" nor would I presume to ascribe to any citizen the design, unworthy to sever the Union of these States, while it is practicable to maintain it, according to

the compact which binds us together as one people.

The true questions for the consideration of the Southern States of the Union at this time, are comprised in the inquiry—

1st. Has the Constitution been violated by the Federal Government in a manner and to an extent, injurious to the interests of these States—destructive of the rights of property and secured by an express provision of that instrument—and disparaging to that equality among the States of the Union, and the citizens thereof, without which the Constitution would never have been formed or ratified?

2d. Have the measures of the Government been of such a character as to destroy a just equilibrium among the States, and to give for all time to come, an unconditional majority to one section of the Union over the section which recognizes the institution of African slavery, so that the section being thus possessed of the entire power in all the branches of the Government may so administer the Constitution as to place the Southern States in the condition of supplicants, instead of equals, dependent for everything connected with their welfare or national policy, on the absolute will of their associates in the confederacy—which power, thus possessed, an experience has shown, will be exercised for sectional purposes.

3d. If the Constitution has been violated, and the rights of the Southern States thereby put in jeopardy, are these violations of such a character as to call for ultimate measures to correct them, and to place, on a sure foundation, the institution of slavery, as it has existed from the period of our colonial condition down to the present time?

These are matters of grave importance, which will call forth the calm and dispassionate consideration of the Convention; but if it should be the determination of that body that the evils of which we complain, and the infractions of the Constitution are of such a character that no hope of redress can be found short of a manly declaration of our rights as freemen, and the sons of freemen, that it will remain for this body to decide whether our rights should be simply asserted, without any practical effort to maintain them in the existing circumstances of the country, or whether the time for definite action has arrived. These are questions which cannot be lightly disposed of.

The meeting of the Convention having been postponed to a distant day, ample opportunity for reflection and for the development of the policy and action of other States, when calmly considered, may lead us to a safe and satisfactory conclusion.

The first duty of a free people towards the Government of their choice is, allegiance and obedience to its constitutional laws and ordinances; and the highest duty of the Government towards the people, over whom its power and jurisdiction extends, is protection against wrongs internal and external—the maintenance of a just equality, both of burdens and benefits, in all the relations subsisting between them, social and political; and the preservation of that liberty which has been rendered sacred to us by the memory of those who achieved it, and by the blessings which its enjoyment have spread over the wide extent of this free and happy country.

These respective duties and obligations being faithfully observed and executed, will, without a resort to the various expedients of military power, secure, for all time to come, the Union of these States and the harmony of the people without regard to geographical boundaries or sectional interests. Preserve the Constitution unbroken, and we may safely say of this Union—*exto perpetua*.

I shall again address my fellow-citizens on the state of the country, and the causes which, in my judgment, have contributed to bring on us the fearful crisis which now threatens our political existence.

It is my purpose, before the approaching election for members of the Convention, to review the measures of the first session of the 31st Congress, which have been subsequently made the test of patriotism; and we find a long list of the names of our distinguished Senators and Representatives who come forward and commit themselves as political propagandists, and ostracize all who do not subscribe to their confession of faith, as unworthy to serve their country in any capacity whatever, either under the State or Federal Governments. Indeed, so sacred are these measures held by this new school of statesmen and patriots, that they not only denounce, with bitter imprecations, all who shall dare to question the absolute efficacy of these heaving measures; but the unfortunate victim of their denunciations is gravely held, by these learned jurists, to be guilty of the crime of high treason against the majesty of the law.

Constructive treason is abrogated by an express provision of the Constitution; but in this age of "progress," the definition of this high offence against our free Government has been carried back to the days of Jeffries and Titus Oates.

Everything at this day is treason which comes in conflict with the will of the majority, whether that will comports with the Constitution or not; and the worst of all treason is, to express opinions unfavorable to those acts which are denominated, par excellence, the "glorious compromise."

I shall pay my respects to these lofty measures and their advocates, at the first leisure moment; and I may add the consolation to myself, that if Rome must fall, I am innocent.

In fulfilling this task, I trust it will be seen that according all considerations not connected with the integrity of our free institutions, it shall be my province to spread over the country a moral influence better

calculated to restore the good feelings which seem to have departed from among us, and to revive the empire of reason which, under the most gloomy posture of public affairs, is the surest guide to a just and proper conclusion.

Men will not reason when their passions are up," and it is the true philosophy of governments and of enlightened statesmen, to soothe and smother away the causes, real or imaginary, which may be calculated to produce results unfriendly to the best interests of the Government, and people.

Confessions connected with my private affairs, which, during the summer, must occupy much of my attention, together with my physical inability obliges me, very reluctantly, to ask to be excused from entering into the canvass for the proposed Convention.

I long, with all my heart, that Southern Rights may be equally respected with the rights of all the other States of the Union; and that your deliberations may tend substantially, to place these rights on a foundation not to be shaken by faction or intrigue. I beg you to be assured of the great respect and consideration with which I am your friend and fellow citizen.

GEO. POINDEXTER.

Slavery in the South.

A northerner, upon his first arrival in the South, is apt to be horrified at the aspect of slavery. In descending the river, he discovers upon the lower deck of the steamer that is bearing him along, a crowd of slaves who are being carried to the southern mart. At once gloomy visions of ruptured friendship, and shattered ties of relationship, spread upon his mind. He finds the poor creatures listening in dismay to the yaras of some heartless boatman, who informs them that cotton seed is the main slave provender in the South. Sometimes the steamer stops at a plantation, for the trader has negotiated a sale with a passenger. The planter takes his subject of purchase on shore, and our traveller sees the poor black in tears at the moment of leaving the companions of his voyage. Then again for fear of any of the dusky crew effecting escape, he detects a guard at each of the landing places. In addition to this, in case of misconduct, he sees a few blows inflicted upon the negro's back. He finds it extremely difficult to reconcile all this with his preconceived ideas of human rights. But this is but all. Our northern friend goes down to the Third Municipality and sees, standing in rows, numerous groups of blacks of both sexes, stretching along the pavements. They are exposed for sale as a horse, or other article of trade. He enters the Arcade and a merry-faced auctioneer is crying the merits of a slave, who stands upon the platform by his side. All this horrifies him, and he wonders that men can be so cruel.

Time elapses, and our northerner has embarked in business. He conceals his sentiments about slavery, for he wishes to detect the working of the whole system, before he expresses himself. His dayman is a slave. From the necessity of the case, he was compelled to employ him. Before he is aware of the state of his feelings, he finds an attachment springing up towards the rascal, for he is shrewd, attentive, industrious, respectful, and so excessively merry-hearted that he is always whistling. In a very short time, our prejudiced friend is heard to declare that he would not exchange Sambo for all the Yankees in Christendom. John, the waiter at his boarding-house, is so excessively polite that he gave him a dime one day after dinner. This domestic multiplied John's assiduosities to such an extent, that he has found himself under the necessity of bestowing upon the black rogue all his old clothes. Frequently, in his bed-room he detects himself cracking waggles with the fellow. John is so obliging, so honest, and withal so frisky and cheerful, that he really loves him more than he ever did servant before.

He once asked John, if he should like to be free. "Oh yes," was the reply, "but then there were so many free niggers so bad and so dirty, that he did not know but he would rather remain a gentleman and be as he is." John speaks of his master and mistress in the most affectionate terms, and frequently begs some change from our friends that he may make presents to the children. The washerwoman of our northern friend is an old black dame with but two front teeth in her head. She affects a vast amount of piety, is garrulous on the subject, and has taken several occasions to do out to our friend much moral instruction. She tells him that her old "missis" reads the word to her every Sunday, and she congratulates herself that she is not as bad as other "niggers." She is correct in her account, and exacts to the last penny, for she says that "she and missis is poor." In spite of himself our friend really affectionates the old dusky creature, and has resolved to make her a fine Christmas present. His prejudices are wearing away, and he begins to think of purchasing a boy. He is particularly struck with the happy temperament of the slave, his carelessness for the future, his warm attachment under good treatment, his gratitude for the smallest favors, his devoted interest in all that concerns his master, and his frank disposition. At first he was disposed to smile at the frequent contrasts which the fellow institutes between his own and the situation of others with whom he is brought in contact, but reflection convinces our friend that the slave in Louisiana is more to be envied than thousands of free persons that he has seen in the northern States. Nay, when worn and haggard with the toils and disappointments of the day, he sometimes wishes that he himself was

in with his shining back, and cheerful and merry laugh. Our friend has visited different times nearly every church in the city. He sees the happy, well-dressed blacks in their allotted part of each house of worship, and he has frequently remained to listen to the discourses directed to them. At funerals, he has witnessed processions of hundreds of blacks, slaves and free, and he has noticed more heartfelt sorrow on the part of the African for his master than on the part of the proud white relative of the deceased.

Our friend has also learned that a harsh and cruel master is rarely to be found; that such a man would be driven out of society that the law would be invoked and granted for the protection of the slave; that every where his domestic comforts and relations are considered; that even his holidays are fixed as matters of right, and stringent penalties prohibit the capture of his family ties, or the separation of mother and children.

An acquaintance, engaged in planting, invited our friend to visit him at his residence on the coast. He saw the overseer with his big whip—a traditional scarecrow—and his old prejudices returned. He remained three weeks, and during that whole time but one instance of chastisement occurred, on a plantation embracing some three hundred hands. The scoundrel deserved it for he had stolen a jar of sweetmeats which the mistress had sent to his sick wife. Our friend, in company with his host and the wife of the host, frequently visited the plantation hospital, and was surprised at witnessing the patience with which they listened to the details of various complaints, more especially when he learned that they paid a physician a salary of five hundred dollars to visit it once every day. An elderly and intelligent negress was installed as nurse over some thirty little black objects, ranging in ages from 12 downwards, and our friend was delighted with their antics. Being in a merry mood, he essayed to indulge in some pleasantry with them. They became his friends at once, and crowded around him whenever he made his appearance. In fact, their efforts to please him were absolutely annoying. He rode out one day to observe their mode of labor. The owner of the place was with him. As they drew nigh to the sugar field, where the slaves were toiling, and chattering, and laughing, an old negro, who seemed to be a favorite, walked up to the horses' heads and demanded some "baccas." The master seemed displeased, and asked if he had not received his supply. His reply, that some "nigger" had stolen it, secured him a few cuffs. As the two rode on, they were saluted with bows and smiling recognitions. On their return, they visited the "quarters," and intense was the surprise of our friend when he observed the order, and cleanliness, and comfort, that everywhere prevailed. He had often witnessed the filthy hovels of laborers at the North, victims of a vicious social system, and the contrast was overwhelming. One day, the owner became indisposed, and it was amusing to witness the anxiety of the blacks on his behalf, nor would some four or five sturdy old fellows consent to depart to the scene of their day's labor until the master had promised to send them word, every hour, regarding the state of his health. Our friend was pleased to hear that they enjoyed a "Saturday" each Saturday afternoon, and the entire Sunday, preaching, feasting or dancing as they saw fit. He was forced to believe that their life was a happy one. The banjo rung out its wild melody upon the night air, and the sound of many footsteps accompanied the untutored music. He did not recollect when he had witnessed so much unalloyed happiness, as he found on the plantation of his acquaintance. He saw that when old age came on, and the limbs refused service, the veterans were employed in some very light occupation, or were permitted to task their existence away, in sunshine or shade.

Now our northern friend has ceased to decry slavery. His notions about human rights, and volition, and freedom, from education and intelligence, have all died away in the breeze. He pines to be surrounded by happy, black souls and to own them too. Some parts of the system of slavery he repudiates as unnecessary. He admits there are evils connected with it, but he knows not how to avoid them. The cruelties and hardships, that he had heard and read of, before his advent at the South, he pronounces Blue Beard tales, and with no more solid foundation. He has learned that it is the interest of the master to be kind. He must act with the slave as with his younger children. Humanity, social obligations, the temper of the laws, and his own interest teach the duty of kindness and care. Of all forms of servitude negro slavery is the happiest. Of all classes of laborers they are the most cheerful, the easiest worked, the best cared for in sickness and old age, the vainest and the most content. The negro is an egotist, a coxcomb, and an aristocrat. He is proud of his master, struts like a jackdaw on Sunday, and always boasts of the work he can do, and the big price he brings when put up for sale. Our northern friends soon perceive all this. They admire the cheerful philosophy and fine physical development of the men, the voluptuous forms, warm emotions and gossy complexions of the women. They always conceive to marry southern wives whose property consists in slaves, and it is observed, particularly if they are clergymen, that they make the very tightest masters in the whole country. A shrewd "nigger" will take to the woods any time, when he hears that his "young missis," or the "widow," is about to marry a Yankee preacher, for he knows that hard times are coming—so more

filling on Saturday nights; no more Christmas or birth-day dinners, but double tasks, and half a ration of meat with the bone in it.

The Right to Secede.

One of the most ridiculous humbugs put forth by the press on the side of consolidation, is the humbug that a sovereign State has not the right to secede—that secession would be rebellion. Rebellion! indeed! As if one sovereign could not decline any longer association with fellow sovereigns, but it would be rebellion, forsooth. The great mind which framed the Declaration of Independence, knew as well as any other man that ever lived in the tide of time, what are the rights of men, individually as citizens or collectively as States. In his declaration, he says that "all men are endowed with certain inalienable rights—that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right—nay, it is the duty of such people to throw off such government." Again, in the resolutions of the Kentucky Legislature, in 1798, drafted by him, he says that the several States composing the United States of America, are not united on the principles of unlimited submission to their general government; but that by compact, under the style and title of a constitution of the United States and of amendments thereto they constituted a general government for special purposes—delegated to that government certain definite powers, reserving each State to itself the residuary mass of right to their self-government; and that whenever the general government assumes undelegated powers, its acts are unauthorized, void and of no force; what to this compact, each State acceded as a State, and is an integral party, its co-States forming as to itself the other party. That the government created by this compact was not made the exclusive or final judge of the extent of the power delegated to itself; since that would have made its discretion and not the constitution, the measures of its powers, but that, as in all other cases of compact among parties having no common judge, each party has an equal right to judge for itself, as well of infraction, as of the mode and measure of redress.

And, further on, he says that to take from the States all powers of self-government and transfer them to a general and consolidated government, without regard to the special obligation and reservation solemnly agreed to in that compact, is not for the peace, and happiness or prosperity of the States; (for which objects the Union was formed;) and that therefore, this commonwealth is determined, as it doubts not its co-States are, not tamely to submit to undelegated and consequently unlimited powers in no man or body of men on earth.

that it would be dangerous delusion, were a confidence in the men of our choice, to silence our fears for the safety of our rights; that confidence is every where the parent of despotism; free government is founded in jealousy and not in confidence, which prescribes limited constitutions to bind down those we are obliged to trust with power. In question of power, then, let no more be heard of confidence in man, but bind him down from mischief by the chains of the Constitution.

Modern secessionists claim no more nor less, than the rights here defined by Jefferson; and hence they are no more Traitors than he was; and only as he was, desirous of preserving State Rights in the Union if possible; but to preserve at all hazards out or in. In the language of Jackson, the doctrine of State Rights men is, to contend for nothing but what is right; and to submit to nothing that is wrong.

THE FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW IN MASSACHUSETTS.—Boston, Sunday, March 2.—A very large Anti-Fugitive Slave Law meeting of the citizens of Lynn, Mass., without respect of party, was held in that city last evening. Mayor Hood presided, and made a speech, in which he said, "he considered the law unjust, inhuman, and not fit to be obeyed." He solemnly pledged himself, never to lift a finger in the work of returning a fellow man to slavery; neither would he use his official power, to protect slave catchers.

A Series of strong resolutions were passed, one of which is as follows: Resolved, That the citizens of Lynn being free themselves, will never assist in enslaving others.

A meeting in opposition to the law is to be held this evening in Beverly, and another in Springfield to-morrow night.